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MONDAY, DECEMBER 13, 1909.

THE AUDITORS REPORT AND WHAT IT MEANS.

The balance sheet is the real test of a tax system. Theorists may parade the supposed benefits of one form of taxation; practical economists may condemn another form; one man may glorify the single tax; another may find in a complex system the panacea for every financial ill. All alike, promising and unpromising, complex and simple, have to be subjected to the practical tests of assessment and collection. An auditor's report knows no theory. In its cold pages and formal tables the real justice of the system must inevitably appear.

For this reason the appearance of the Auditor's report at a time when the tax laws are under discussion is most opportune. This exhaustive document is a bulky bone over which legislators may chew and growl during the coming session as they try to digest the unpalatable tax laws of the Commonwealth. A careful student, trained in such matters, can glean a hundred lessons in good and bad economics from this report. He can find ample material for abuse and some items for praise. He can study the practical operations of a most complex tax code and can form positive conclusions as to the justice or injustice of particular taxes.

But in any scrutiny of our tax laws two things appear above everything else. Two faults appear in practically every table in the report. Stripped of unnecessary verbiage these are nothing more or less than (1) gross inequality, and (2) rank injustice. The summary of the tax returns in the Auditor's report shows these more plainly than could a column of comment. Here are the amounts the State received from its chief sources of revenue:

Capitation tax	485,217 05
Franchise tax	111,082 00
Insurance tax	196,222 75
Licenses	92,526 15
Personal property tax	431,936 40
Railroads and canals	752,000 25
Real estate tax	1,252,821 34

Comment on this table is superfluous. Every one believes that the railroads of the State should bear a just proportion of the public expenses, and no one would remove from public corporations the debt they owe the public treasury. But it stands to reason that no tax laws which impose so heavy a burden on public corporations and so light a burden on personal property can be just. It is not that the railroads are taxed too heavily; it is merely that the other taxes are wrongly apportioned. The former may remain just as they are, but the latter may be corrected. Assessments should be made equal; valuations should be made uniform, and each class of property bear its just ratio of taxation.

These facts appear all the more plainly when one examines the report on personal property. Here are figures that can easily be cited, showing that in some localities taxes are from three to four times as heavy as they are in others. One county, with practically the same wealth and resources, pays practically twice the taxes paid by another. The result could not be otherwise. Where the public burden is unfairly distributed and inequitably collected, injustice is inevitable.

KINGS AT THEIR "UNCLES."

Tatters for a prince are bad enough, but hook for a King is worse. There is something pathetic about the King who is forced to wear an old coat, or the Queen who must trudge about in old shoes. But to imagine a monarch tramping in the presence of an obdurate "uncle" and trying to raise him \$250,000 a year is beyond the limit of human endurance. What pangs, what shame, what disgrace!

But this is precisely what is happening in Paris, where the entire jewels of the Sultan Abd-el-Aziz are now on sale. The deposed ruler of Morocco, falling short of cash, pawned his jewels with a Parisian merchant, and now finds himself unable to redeem them. As a result, about 200 pounds of diamonds, emeralds, gold and silver are offered to all comers in a certain shop in the French capital. There seems little prospect that the ex-ruler can redeem them. Short of cash and without his throne, he can hardly pay his 10 per cent. So, within a few days, the whole collection may be disposed of. Monsieur Carbon, the wood dealer, may secure the armlets of Fatima, and Mr. Hogg, of Cincinnati, may buy the emerald and diamond diadem.

It may be a poor consolation to Abd-el-Aziz, but he is not the first monarch to forfeit pawnbroker's interest. Many were the Versailles worthies who dispatched closed carriages to Paris, and thereafter remained away from the levees for months. Even English monarchs, despite the largess of the Commons, have been known to pawn the jewels. In fact, so frequently was this the case under the Angevin Kings that England was practically without crown jewels for a century. Rumor has it that George IV. could never assemble all of his personal jewels at one time, at least without the consent of Lombard Street dealers. It has even been rumored that his present

Majesty, when prince, had a speaking acquaintance with some of the dealers in the same street.

But the chief patrons of the pawn-brokers have been the lesser princes and that vast army of pretenders who fill the ante-rooms of European assemblies. These men have frequently been compelled to part with their emblems of royalty—their only kingdom. A famous pawnbroker in Rome was known as the Pretender's friend during the last generation, and was able to furnish the insignia of any order in Europe upon a few hours' notice. He it was who held the original chain of the Fleece, handed down from the great head of the order, Charles V., to the late Don Carlos.

There is little hope for Abd-el-Aziz. But at the very worst his jewels will be as useful to some one else as they were to him.

GIVE.

The Associated Charities has issued within the last few days its annual appeal for funds. Responses so far have been rather slow and unsatisfactory, but the coming week will doubtless change that. The season of the year is one which touches almost every heart and unlocks in it the springs of kindness and brotherly feeling which are apt to grow somewhat overgrown through other months. Christmas means giving, or it means nothing; and there is no charitable organization in the city through which this prompting to give to others can be carried out with such certainty of good results.

The Associated Charities was started experimentally, and has made a permanent place for itself simply on the basis of what it has actually accomplished. Nobody would now think of returning to the old plan of various organizations, divided interests and scattering results. To conduct the work costs about \$15,000 a year, and this sum must come from voluntary subscriptions. Probably there is no way in which the people of Richmond could spend \$15,000 which would bring so much real, practical benefit to others. No money is wasted; there is no indiscriminate giving; no class of professional dependents is created; the men and women who come for help are put in the way of helping themselves at the earliest possible moment. The Associated Charities does its work cheaply, efficiently and with the most wholesome results. What it does would be done less well by the random giving of individuals at three or five or ten times the cost.

Many of us have more than we need. Some of us have very much more. Nearly all of us as Christmas draws near feel an inner stirring to share our own plenty with those less blessed than we. This is an impulse which it is always safe to follow, and the Associated Charities offers all of us an admirable way.

TO-DAY'S HISTORY TO-MORROW.

To frame flesh and blood on the dry bones of dusty history is never easy. The actors of past ages have been careless of what they left behind them, and equally careless of whether they gave a correct account of their deeds to an inquisitive posterity. A few letters, a mass of dull official documents and a chance memoir or two are all the materials we have to weave into a story that must interest and amuse. The wonder is that historians have been able to draw such accurate pictures of the past as shine from the pages of the great histories.

How different will be the history of to-day in the eyes of to-morrow! If all the materials now available were used to make an accurate picture, not an item of real interest would be lacking. Take, for example, such an event as the death of George Washington, which occurred 110 years ago to-day. All America was and still is interested in it. Every one to-day wants to know exactly how it happened. Trifling incidents became important. But the data at hand will not satisfy the curious in the least.

The lengthy, dry account by Washington's secretary, Tobias Lear, the report of the physicians, the insufficiently dull account of the funeral and the reports of proceedings by various bodies on the event make up the whole body of material. If this great event had occurred yesterday, the narrative would be perfect. A flashlight picture would show the exact position of the body and the precise arrangements of the room. Enthusiastic reporters would doubtless photograph the entire scene. Exhaustive accounts of every detail, with interviews from those present, would supply the text. When the funeral occurred, the music of the band, the orations, even the sobbing, would be recorded, while a moving-picture machine would probably follow the cortege from the time it left the building until the body was placed in the tomb. The proceedings of Congress would, of course, be stenographically reported, and pictures would be taken of the eulogists. These things, preserved and placed away, would give every detail of the scene a hundred years hence.

All of this should be satisfying to leaders of to-day. They may be sure that all the good they can do will be perpetuated. It may be equally satisfying to posterity to know that little of the evil can escape the microscope of the present.

MR. PRIDDY AND V. P. I.
State Veterinarian J. G. Ferneyhough, a graduate of the Virginia Polytechnic Institute, writes a letter to the Roanoke Times complaining of the recent activities of Mr. Lawrence Priddy, president of the Alumni Association of that institution. Apparently Mr. Ferneyhough has the idea that Mr. Priddy's acts are entirely personal and individual, and represent nothing in the world but his own ideas and prejudices. Our own understanding is totally different. What Mr.

Priddy is doing by way of expressing dissatisfaction with present conditions at V. P. I. is being done, unless we err greatly, with the approval of the majority of the Alumni Association. Mr. Priddy wields no divine right of kings. If he is really misrepresenting the Alumni Association, the latter body does not have to put up with him any longer than it desires. It has only to replace him in the presidency with a man whose views are more in sympathy with the views of the majority.

But we think that developments will show that this is by no means the case. The Board of Visitors, at any rate, heretofore deemed not at all antagonistic to the administration, has turned an attentive ear to the complaints which the Alumni Association, under the lead of Mr. Priddy, has been making. The board has cordially invited any committee from the association, or any other person or persons, to appear before its meeting in this city next month and lay before it any and all charges or grounds for dissatisfaction. Probably the board would have displayed such consideration toward any minor faction known to be prejudiced and bent on kicking up a foolish and wholly unnecessary disturbance. The whole State, we venture to say, will indorse this decision of the authorities to go straight to the bottom of all the whispers and rumors and grumblings which have been in circulation for a year. The outcome of the meeting on January 13 may show that Mr. Priddy and his associates, so far from being irresponsible trouble-makers, have largely assisted in rendering a public service to the State.

SALEBROS.

Nairobi gradually re-emerges on to the map as the Colonel reapproaches. Hogs were bringing record prices in Chicago on Friday, but the plans and specifications in each case called for four legs.

Pearly was re-elected president of the Explorers' Club, which, after all, proves nothing.

Cotton prices leap like the cost of living, which, indeed, they partly are.

Zelaya's second son is named Anabel, and it requires no Sherlock to deduce that Mr. Knox deems him a molly-coddle.

The noble Christmas shoppers of Richmond are from seven to eleven times as considerate of the tired little salesgirls as the arrogant and boorish Christmas shoppers of New York.

When speaking of petulant pastimes, don't concentrate on football. Give a word or two and then to sailing a boat on the Great Lakes.

If he desired to raise any considerable war-dust in this country, Zelaya must make the fatal mistake of not being friendly with the Emperor of Japan.

The coal-man had better make the most of this snap. The new Gulf Stream rule, the official date for when the cold of winter in Richmond is Jan. 17.

Shall we supersede the Anti-Trust law with a mere Mistrust affair?

However, a long-green Christmas would look about right to us.

The weather calls for Dr. Cook hats and Kookshoo overcoats.

"Dunkle" and "Loose" sound like men who ought to give, not an affidavit, but an Alfred Davy.

The Ice Trust has been "found guilty," and this is a discovery that will not have to be passed upon by any board of scientists.

Our New York corps of little research-workers is now sitting late on the difficult problem: Why do women marry W. Gould Brokaw?

CHANGING FRONT ON TARIFF.

MacVeagh's Boston Speech Welcomed by Old-Time Republicans.
That was a remarkable speech made by the Secretary of the Treasury, Mr. MacVeagh, at Boston, last Wednesday night. Here is an extract:

"There is a new tariff epoch, that fact is that the Republican party has changed its front. Whereas, it has been marching toward higher and higher tariff, and it has now faced about and is marching, no matter how slow any one may think its present pace, toward changed conditions. This is a wonderful, radical and fundamental change, the importance of which has not been sufficiently recognized by the public."

The State Journal has recognized it right along. It has contended for months that the tariff was not the Republican's and his crowd was not the Republicanism of the people who belonged to that party. It contended that the tariff was not the Republican's and his crowd was not the Republicanism of the people who belonged to that party. It contended that the tariff was not the Republican's and his crowd was not the Republicanism of the people who belonged to that party.

These things need be no convulsion about this matter. There need be no defeat in order to right things. There is only need to face in the right direction and quietly and conscientiously go that way. The opportunity opens in the proposition for a scientific reference of the subject of tariff taxation. Out of this will come the solution, in which only the merits of the Payne law will remain, and to which better things will be added.—Ohio State Journal.

New Turkey's New Army.
The latest proof that the new government in Turkey is determined to keep its pledge of treating all subjects alike comes with the issue of a firman deposing the Grand Vizier, Dr. Mehmed, and appointing a new one, Mr. Mehmed, a subject to military duty. Hitherto the army has been made up of the believers in the true faith, and no infidel dog of a Christian could bear arms.

This has formed one of the strongest holds the Sultan has had over his subject provinces, since the Christian had no military leader who might start a revolt; in fact, no Christian had any military training at all. It is a case in which the Sultan has been forced to abdicate, there were 1,500 Bulgarian volunteers.

The invading Turkish firm was accompanied with great pomp. It was read in public at Stamboul, Pera and Scutari; prayers were offered and patriotic speeches were made. The Bulgarian and religious beliefs in honor of this proof that there was peace among the warring elements.—Boston Globe.

Borrowed Jingles

Speaking of Names.
"Things are seldom what they seem."
In a phrase one often hears,
Jingling in the ear,
Was invented in Algeria.

Turkish legs are really French;
Chilli is not from Bengal;
Hamburg steaks are native fakes;
Swiss cheese isn't Swiss at all.

German pancakes come from Spain,
Spanish omelettes from Peru;
French beans grow in the East, and know,
On the plains of Timbuctoo.

Wiener schnitzels come from Greece,
Irish stew from Palestine;
Long the Nile, for mile on mile,
Grows the sacred Norway pine.

Why continue? All we claim
Is a point we need not press—
There is nothing in a name.
Every day a little less.

—Chicago Tribune.

MERELY JOKING.

Protest.
Do you think of that English notion of abolishing the House of Lords? "It's an outrage," answered Mr. Curzon. "It's worse than bankruptcy. It's repudiation. We cannot make such a thing as a big matrimonial investment will never stand for it."—Washington Evening Star.

The Bold Man.
Maude: "What do you think. That bold, handsome Jack, who tried to flirt with me in church."
Ethel: "Where was he sitting?"
Maude: "In the aisle behind me."—Boston Transcript.

For Others.
"That fellow is the worst pessimist I ever saw."
"As to how?"
"He builds castles in the air, he builds jails."—Houston Chronicle.

And Not Sooner.
If you don't settle within two weeks I'll post you as a delinquent debtor."
"All right," said the poet. "I'll pay on publication."—Pittsburg Post.

He Owns Up.
"Own up, now. Who's the head of your family?"
"My wife," admitted Mr. Enpeck. "But since my daughters are grown we have a commission form of government."—Kansas City Journal.

By Comparison.
I notice some of the old newspaper jokes have been staged on the streets of New York. "Yes, and they really seem quite fresh in a farce."—Louisville Courier-Journal.

THE MERRY MOCKERS.

EVEN if it be true, as stated by Mr. Alford, that the panic cost the people \$300,000,000, that sum is a mere bagatelle compared with the amount that Alford has cost the ultimate consumer.—Louisville Courier-Journal.

Just as the bills to be paid are larger than ever, it is said that the government is going to make the bills with which they are paid smaller than heretofore.—New York Tribune.

"Lo, the poor consumer!" exclaims the Birmingham News. Very low, indeed, but living in faint hope of future convalescence, nevertheless.—Washington Herald.

The first chapter in a novel recently published contained the following "Adieu" scene: "The girl continued to sit on the sands, gazing upon the briny deep, on whose heaving bosom the tall ships went merrily by. She was alone, and her heart was full of much joy and sorrow, and coal, emigrants and hopes, and salt fish."—Indianapolis News.

STATE PRESS

Payling Defense Witnesses.
One of the questions of court procedure that may engage the attention of Virginia legislators, as well as those of some other States, is the question of the payment of witnesses.

The case is this: Ought not the State, in view of the fact that it pays the expenses of witnesses, to be allowed to pay them? It is a question of procedure, and also in view of the fact that it has the power to summon witnesses, to be allowed to pay them? It is a question of procedure, and also in view of the fact that it has the power to summon witnesses, to be allowed to pay them?

The claim is made that, inasmuch as the State has power to summon witnesses, it is only fair that it should be allowed to pay them. It is a question of procedure, and also in view of the fact that it has the power to summon witnesses, to be allowed to pay them?

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GREAT LAWYERS MAKE BAD WILLS

While Careful on Behalf of Clients, They Are Careless in Personal Affairs.

FAMOUS ST. LEONARDS CASE

Court Probated Will That Had Been Destroyed and Denounced Legal Heir.

BY LA MARQUE DE PONTENROY.
HAT Lord Selby's will should be probated, is a question which has been in the keeping with precedence, and need excite no astonishment. Lord Selby was one of the ablest lawyers of the House of Lords, and enjoyed a very large and successful legal practice, deriving a fortune therefrom before becoming Speaker of the House of Commons, and ultimately a peer of the realm. Great lawyers seem to be incapable of making a proper testamentary disposition of their own affairs, and this peculiarity has been quite explained by the fact that in making his own will a lawyer does not give to the matter the same conscientious care that he would feel compelled to accord thereto if he had received a fee. Indeed, a story is told of former Ambassador, Lord Salisbury, to the effect that whenever he happens to transact any legal business for himself, he always makes a will, and another, so as to convey the impression that the business is being duly charged and paid for, and therefore demands the most scrupulous care and attention.

Lord Selby, however, who was the son of a well-known baronet of Duke Street, St. James's, London, conceived the idea of making a will, and his grandsons and heirs, Edward, son of the late Henry, who had predeceased him. The will was made in 1896, and was found at his death, in 1906, to have left no provision for his grandsons, and a description that the utmost difficulty was experienced in securing the probate, which would probably have been obtained had he not been a great lawyer.

What is the story? It was the same with the will of his predecessors on the bench of the House of Lords, Lord Selby and his grandsons, while the peers who have occupied the woolsack have been particularly unfortunate in this respect. The will of Lord Selby, which was found at his death, in 1906, to have left no provision for his grandsons, and a description that the utmost difficulty was experienced in securing the probate, which would probably have been obtained had he not been a great lawyer.

During the closing years of his life, the great judge, who was the son of a well-known baronet of Duke Street, St. James's, London, conceived the idea of making a will, and his grandsons and heirs, Edward, son of the late Henry, who had predeceased him. The will was made in 1896, and was found at his death, in 1906, to have left no provision for his grandsons, and a description that the utmost difficulty was experienced in securing the probate, which would probably have been obtained had he not been a great lawyer.

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Daily Queries and Answers

Address all communications for this column to Query Editor, Times-Dispatch. No mathematical problems will be solved, no coins or stamps valued, and no dealers' names will be given.

Book Owned by John Adams.

Could you tell me whether a small book entitled "Devout Exercises of the Heart," written by Mrs. Elizabeth Rowe, formerly known under the name of Phillis, printed by Thomas Kirtland of Brooklyn, in the year 1807, and used the property of John Adams, with his autograph on the inside cover, has any special value as a relic? G. M. P., Petersburg, Va.

The book in question probably has no special value of itself, but, with the autograph, it should sell for a considerable premium.

Largest Legal Fraternity.

Please tell me which is the largest legal fraternity in American colleges. What is its membership? STUDENT.

Phi Delta Phi, which has a membership of \$50.

Sewanee Colors.
Please give me the colors of Sewanee. Purple and old gold. READER.

Working Women.
How many working women are there in the United States? I mean women engaged in domestic service, and in stores, etc.? INQUIRER.
4,833,830 at last report. It is probable that the number for the year will show as many as 6,000,000.

Import Value of Furs.

What is the value of the following quantities of furs imported into this country for use by women is greater than the value of the same quantities of clothing and printed matter. B denies this. Who is right? C.
A. The annual value of imported furs is about \$8,000,000; books, etc., imported amount to only \$5,100,000.

Almanac of 1850, Etc.

Is an almanac published in 1850 of any value?
2. Is it correct to say, "The phone is not connected or disconnected." Bagley, Va. READER.
1. It depends entirely upon which almanac is consulted.

Oldest Colored Lodge.
What is the oldest colored Masonic lodge in this country? READER.
The Prince Hall Grand Lodge, established in 1807. This was the outgrowth of the African Lodge, No. 459, established September 24, 1784.

State Flowers.

I see there is some talk about adopting the golden rod as a State flower for Virginia. Are there not some other States in the Union which have this flower? READER.
Yes, Alabama, Maryland, Missouri, Nebraska and Oregon all claim this flower.

Maryland Inheritance Tax.